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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/461,738	12/16/1999	HIROOMI MOTOHASHI	0557-4875-2	4201

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OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

WALLERSON, MARK E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2626

DATE MAILED: 01/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/461,738

Applicant(s)

MOTOHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Mark E. Wallerson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 10-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 10-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Part III DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant(s)

1. This action is responsive to the following communications: amendment filed on **10/24/2005**.

2. This application has been reconsidered. Claims 10-14 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 10, 12, 13, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitamura (U.S. 6,400,463) in view of Sugishima (U.S. 4,797,706).

With respect to claims 10 and 13, Kitamura discloses an image forming apparatus (1001) connected to at least a second image forming apparatus (1002-1004) such that communication can be executed between the two image forming apparatuses (the abstract), the first image forming apparatus comprising a reading unit (351) which reads an image of a document; a printing unit (352) which prints the read image; a display unit (figure 6) which displays keys used for selecting a function; a controller (603) which executes a link copy mode in which the read image is transferred to the second image forming apparatus for sharing of the printing of the read image (column 21, lines 6-10).

Kitamura differs from claims 10 and 13 in that he does not clearly disclose that the first image forming apparatus is configured to display in a link copy mode only keys for selection of

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usable functions in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected, the usable functions being functions which both the first and second image forming apparatuses are able to execute.

Sugishima discloses a multi-unit image processing system wherein when the link mode (multi mode) is selected (column 17, line 67 to column 18, line 11), a first image forming apparatus (1) is configured to display in a link copy mode only keys for selection of usable functions in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected, the usable functions being functions which both the first and second image forming apparatuses are able to execute (which reads on in the multimode, the size of sheets set in the printer of the designated number is repeatedly displayed, and paper sizes not set in any of the designated printers are skipped and not displayed) (column 18, lines 12-18).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kitamura wherein the first image forming apparatus is configured to display in a link copy mode only keys for selection of usable functions in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected, the usable functions being functions which both the first and second image forming apparatuses are able to execute.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kitamura by the teaching of Sugishima in order to more effectively utilize the plural readers, so that if any printer is not available, the cause for this can be clearly determined and countermeasures can be taken immediately as disclosed by Sugishima in column 25, lines 27-30.

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With regard to claim 12 and 15, Kitamura discloses the master image forming apparatus is connected to the other image forming apparatus peer to peer (which reads on master to slave) (figure 1).

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima as applied to claims 10 and 13 above, and further in view of Nakai (U.S. 6,081,342).

With respect to claims 11 and 14, Kitamura as modified differs from claims 11 and 14 in that he does not clearly disclose the function includes stapling.

Nakai discloses an image forming system wherein plural image forming apparatuses transmit image data to each other and the functions of the image forming apparatus includes stapling (figure 8(b)). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kitamura as modified wherein the function includes stapling. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kitamura as modified by the teaching of Nakai in order to improve the efficiency of the system.

Response to Arguments

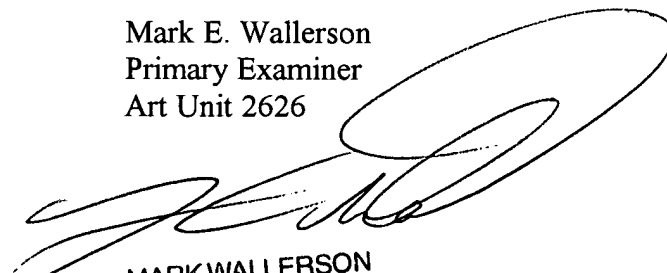
7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 10-15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark E. Wallerson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7470. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday - 6:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kimberly Williams can be reached on (571) 272-7471. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mark E. Wallerson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2626



MARK WALLERSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER

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